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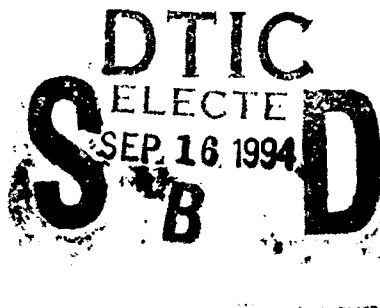
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Military Support of Drug Traffic  
Interdiction: Is It Working?

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This study investigates the role and effectiveness of the United States military in national efforts to counter the trafficking of illegal drugs into the country. It focuses on the effects of active forces in interdicting narcotics traffic originating in Central and South America. The study provides background on the history of military involvement, legal issues, drug trafficking organizations, and current military efforts. The study considers differing opinions on the effectiveness of the military and relates the arguments to the issue of measures of effectiveness. The military role in the national counterdrug effort is clearly one of support to law enforcement. Critics of the military effort cite the continued availability of narcotics as evidence of military failure. Proponents cite mission success and positive comments from supported law enforcement agencies as indicators of success. The controversy revolves around the absence of clearly stated measures of effectiveness upon which all parties have agreed. The study concludes that there is convincing evidence that the military effort has produced tactical and operational success while recognizing that strategic goals have yet to be met. The military, as with other agencies involved, cannot be singularly held responsible in this effort for strategic success or failure. Finally, measures of success must be appropriately developed and consistently applied.

Decoys, Multispectral Close Combat Decoy (MCCD),  
Deception

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MILITARY SUPPORT OF DRUG TRAFFIC INTERDICTION:  
IS IT WORKING?

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army  
Command and General Staff College in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

GERALD G. HOWARD, MAJ, USA  
B.S., West Virginia University,  
Morgantown, West Virginia, 1978

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas  
1994

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

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## ABSTRACT

MILITARY SUPPORT OF DRUG TRAFFIC INTERDICTION: IS IT  
WORKING? by MAJ Gerald G. Howard, USA, 107 pages.

This study investigates the role and effectiveness of the United States military in national efforts to counter the trafficking of illegal drugs into the country. It focuses on the effects of active duty forces in interdicting narcotics traffic originating in Central and South America. The study provides background on the history of military involvement, legal issues, drug trafficking organizations, and current military efforts. The study considers differing opinions on the effectiveness of the military and relates the arguments to the issue of measures of effectiveness.

The military role in the national counterdrug effort is clearly one of support to law enforcement. Critics of the military effort cite the continued availability of narcotics as evidence of military failure. Proponents cite mission success and positive comments from supported law enforcement agencies as indicators of success. The controversy revolves around the absence of clearly stated measures of effectiveness upon which all parties have agreed.

The study concludes that there is convincing evidence that the military effort has produced tactical and operational success while recognizing that strategic goals have yet to be met. The military, as with other agencies involved, cannot be singularly held responsible in this effort for strategic success or failure. Finally, measures of success must be appropriately developed and consistently applied.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Over the past thirty years, the United States has been plagued with a growing threat to our national security that is extremely elusive and exceptionally difficult to counter. It attacks our country at and inside our national borders. Unlike conventional enemies, this evil affects us in our homes, in our schools, and in our businesses in every town and city in the nation. It follows no rules. It is based not in any political context but in ruthless crime and it leaves a wake of criminal devastation wherever it goes. This threat to society and to the security of this nation is illegal drug trafficking. Our response to this enemy and the action we take to defeat it will decide our safety today and the quality of life we will have in the future.

Our national leadership recognizes the gravity of the situation and is acting on various levels. In President Bush's 1993 National Security Strategy, illegal drug trafficking is listed as one of five leading regional instabilities that threaten global security for which we must be prepared to respond militarily.<sup>1</sup> In concert, the



National Military Strategy says, "The detection and significant reduction of the production and trafficking of illegal drugs is a high priority national security mission of our armed forces."<sup>2</sup> This dedication and stated intent to use military force to combat the threat of illegal drug trafficking raises many questions of legality, capability, and effectiveness. The course of this research effort will investigate the actions involved and the effectiveness to date of U.S. military participation in the war against illegal drug trafficking into the United States.

Active, overt use of military in the counterdrug effort is a relatively new mission for the armed forces. Since 1981 the role of the Department of Defense has expanded in response to the severity of the problem and subsequent recognition by Congress and the administration that something must be done. In 1989, the Department of Defense was named the lead government agency for detection and monitoring of illegal drug flow into the country. This action by Congress propelled the Pentagon into the most formalized role it had yet experienced in this national security issue.

Each service is involved in varying degrees in support of law enforcement agencies to conduct operations to counter illegal drug trafficking. Inherent in this new mission is a wide spectrum of problems ranging from

legalities to doctrine. There are opposing views on what the military role should be, how it should be executed, whether the military should even be involved, and how to measure military contributions. There are fundamental legal issues contained in the Posse Comitatus Act which prohibits the use of federal military forces to enforce civil law. There are also practical problems in the areas of command and control and intelligence sharing. Strategic, operational and tactical perspectives provide necessary context in which to evaluate the use of military forces in the counterdrug war. Disseminating this information to military units and other government and law enforcement agencies in the field is key to success. The final issue in this list is possibly the most controversial in light of the question at hand. There is also a significant debate over how to measure effectiveness in the campaign against drugs. As with any new challenge, there is a learning curve with corresponding effort to improve while simultaneously looking for more success.

The primary question concerns the effectiveness of this new tool in the fight against illegal drug trafficking. Has the introduction of military force and capability, in support of ongoing law enforcement efforts, significantly increased our success in stemming the flow of illegal drugs into the United States? Specific questions to consider are:

- (1) What led the U.S. military into this effort?
- (2) What are the constraints?
- (3) What is the threat?
- (4) What is the national strategy?
- (5) What is the mission?
- (6) How is the military executing the mission?
- (7) What effect do military operations have upon drug traffickers?
- (8) How does this effect fit into the success or failure of the overall national strategy?

The conclusion to be drawn from this analysis is whether we should continue in this effort or whether the use of the military in this mission is misplaced or inappropriate.

Nearly every day there is news relating to counterdrug efforts. These stories range from reports of small time drug distributors being arrested by local police to national and international agreements aimed at combatting the major organizations responsible for these crimes. With all this tactical success, however, we continue to have a ready supply of illegal drugs on the street.<sup>3</sup> We continue to have other drug-related crimes and violence at alarming rates. We continue to bear the weight of the social ills and the economic costs that befall us in the wake of lives destroyed by the use of illegal drugs.

If the application of military force in this effort is succeeding, then it could very well be a decisive factor in significantly reducing the flow of illegal drugs into the United States. If, however, our military efforts are in vain, then we must review our mission and our methods.

This thesis will review the history of military action against drug trafficking, describe the enemy, discuss the capabilities and the organization currently in use, and suggest the political implications, both local and national, of the effort. Only after thoroughly understanding the background of the problem can the effectiveness of our efforts be assessed.

The history of our national concern over the trafficking of illegal drugs into our country goes back at least to the early 1900s when the U.S. initiated the Shanghai Opium Commission in 1909. This was the first international conference on narcotic drugs.<sup>4</sup> This problem is not new to our society and the question of how to successfully battle it has been a concern for a long time. Concurrently, the issue of using the American military as an instrument to enforce the law has undergone great debate and scrutiny since our birth as a nation.<sup>5</sup> The severity of the drug trafficking problem and the tremendous capability the military can bring to bear on it bring these two issues

together. Prior to the 1980s our military participation in this law enforcement issue was minimal.

In 1981, however, the wheels were set in motion that would draw the military into the counterdrug effort. Public Law 97-86 significantly redefined the potential use of the military in support of civilian law enforcement agencies. It broadened the scope of support available from the military and clarified the roles. Through the 1980s there was a marked reluctance on the part of the Department of Defense (DOD) to get too deeply involved. Congress changed all that in 1989 when it named the DOD as the federal government's lead agency for detection and monitoring of illegal drug trafficking. At this time the military took on this major new mission in earnest and began planning, organizing, and resourcing to meet the challenge. Throughout the 1980s DOD was involved in operations ranging from simple border surveillance to major military action in the form of Operation Just Cause. Significant organizational measures were taken to configure headquarters to coordinate and manage the efforts. This thesis will explore more fully the impact of the events of the 1980s on the development of mission parameters and will review the main actions taken and what was learned from them.

Significant to understanding any military mission is understanding the threat that must be faced. This thesis

will focus on the trafficking that originates in Central and South America. It will describe the major cartels and other drug organizations, how they operate, the equipment they use, and how successful they have been in the face of military intervention.

Next, it is important to also understand the military organizational structure and how it fits into the overall national counterdrug scheme. This thesis will examine the missions given to commanders and how they have incorporated them into their overall plans. It will review the organizational structure of the drug fighting Joint Task Forces (JTFs), how they function, and where they fit into the master plan. It will review current publications and their content. It will also consider how the military coordinates with other government agencies and where military strategy fits within the national strategy. It will examine the role of the military in relation to other agencies involved in the effort. This will clarify the context in which military effectiveness should be assessed.

The assessment of effectiveness is key to answering the question of overall contribution and worth. How to assess effectiveness has been the root of many discussions. At least one study, concerning the opinions and perceptions of state governors and other officials, has been conducted by military researchers to answer just this question. There

are several schools of thought ranging from the "body count" techniques of tallying seizures and arrests to very subjective methods of considering attitudes of officials involved in the fight. This thesis will consider each of these methods and attempt to assess their applicability.

Any assessment of effectiveness naturally leads to a determination of success or failure. Any discussion of success or failure must be in relation to the mission assigned. If the mission is to seal the borders, then there is sufficient evidence to indicate that we have yet to succeed. If, however, the mission is something less than that and is, in fact, assigned in light of the overall strategy, the assessment of effectiveness and success takes on a new significance. Herein may lie the key to defining effectiveness and hence determining the military's level of success. Effectiveness, and subsequent success, may need to be measured on the different levels of tactical, operational, and strategic missions.

In the analysis of effectiveness of military efforts against drug traffickers, the reasons for success or failure will also be assessed. As with all national strategies, the ends, ways, and means must be complementary. Additionally, the elements of national power must be applied in harmony to derive the maximum effect of each through the resultant synergy. It is clear that the military role is not the only

national effort to counter illegal drug trafficking. The question then becomes one of relation. How does the military effort fit into the overall picture? Is it a major player or simply part of the supporting cast?

The military role in this undertaking has been on an evolutionary track since the early 1980s. Where it leads has significant implications for military participants and planners as well as for the nation overall. What the Department of Defense is able to achieve in this endeavor may or may not significantly sway the "tide of battle." The way it goes about it will definitely have a significant impact on how it trains and prioritizes resources. The research proposed for this thesis will evaluate the military role in counterdrug operations as a viable mission for U.S. forces.

This thesis is based on the assumption that U.S. military power will continue to be used against drug trafficking for the foreseeable future. This assumption appears valid in that Commanders in Chief continue to plan for these operations in their mission plans. Additionally, the U.S. Atlantic Command, acting as executive agent for the Joint Staff, recently published a draft of the first joint operations manual designed to describe the counterdrug mission environment, the relationships of the key players, and the military roles in support of this effort. Finally,



the President's 1992 National Drug Control Strategy continues to specify a named role for the Department of Defense.

Fundamental to measuring effectiveness of military power is the assumption that statistics gathered on the flow and availability of illegal drugs is a true reflection of reality. This assumption recognizes the relatively non-scientific methods through which many of these statistics are derived. The experts who gather such statistics recognize that they are not foolproof and the margin of error for any deductions drawn from them is relatively wide. Statistics, however, will not be the sole measure of effectiveness.

Illegal Drug Flow, for purposes of this research, is defined as the movement of illegal drugs or drug manufacturing raw ingredients from outside U.S. borders to points inside U.S. borders.

To provide a starting point for discussion, effectiveness is defined as the accomplishment of an assigned mission with a resulting useful contribution to the overall counterdrug effort. As discussed above, this definition and assessment will consume a major portion of the thesis and a sizable amount of the research effort. Effectiveness will be directly related to the missions assigned and their associated conditions and standards.

Meeting the standard, i.e., doing what is asked within the resources given, normally equates to success. The issue, then, becomes one of relating mission success to overall effectiveness. In other words, doing what has been asked and that action having some positive impact on the total effort.

The following limitations apply to this project:

1. The research is limited to unclassified sources. As such, classification or distribution of some records may preclude access to some detailed data pertinent to the problem.

2. This thesis will concentrate on the active duty military effort to counter cocaine trafficking from Central and South America. Trafficking from sources in the Middle East and Asia will be considered only as necessary to provide context in the overall strategy.

The following section describes the research methodology used to develop the background information and to draw the final conclusions of the thesis.

### Research Design

The design for research for this thesis has five phases. The first phase consists of a thorough study of the historical documentation relevant to this topic. The second phase centers on a study of the threat--the drug traffickers

and their organizations. The third phase is a complete study of the civil-military cooperation structure that currently exists, along with the mission as it has been given to U.S. military forces. The fourth phase is a study of documentation that gives statistical and reported indications of success (measures of effectiveness) in this endeavor. The fifth phase assesses the applicability of the measures of effectiveness in regard to assigned missions and the role of the military in the overall strategy. From that analysis, conclusions are drawn relating to the thesis question.

In the course of this research, an assessment of the degree of success achieved by the military in counterdrug operations is derived with an eye toward defining how effectiveness should be measured.

The five phases did not occur in a consecutive manner. Some began simultaneously but ended at different points in time. The following time line illustrates the original intent with these phases.

	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
Phase 1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Phase 2		2	2	2	2	2	2
Phase 3			3	3	3	3	3
Phase 4				4	4	4	4
Phase 5					5	5	5

Phase 1 is a succinct review of the history that led to the decision to actively use U.S. military forces to combat drug traffickers. The review included research on the civil agencies and their functions along with specific events that led to military considerations. It reviews the legal ramifications of Posse Comitatus and the arguments on both sides of that issue. Specifically, it will review how the cooperative effort has evolved from 1980 to 1990 with emphasis on how experience shaped the decisions. Finally, the historical review serves as a baseline to initially uncover success or failure in the early efforts and to compare to our recent experience over the past three years.

Phase 2 is an analysis of the threat. As with any military operation, to win you must know your enemy. You must know his capabilities and limitations. You must get inside his decision cycle with yours in order to take away his options and impose your conditions upon him. Likewise, to gauge our effectiveness against this threat, we must know what we are dealing with. Phase 2 serves to put some substance to this aspect of the problem by exposing the methods of operations used, the sources of power, the background, both personal and political, of the people involved and, ultimately, their weaknesses.

Phase 3 serves to portray our own organizations, people, and background much in the way phase 2 focused on

the enemy. It serves also as a cap to the historical review from phase 1 and concurrently lead us into the research question at hand. Through comparing our enemy strength and weaknesses to our own methods of operation, the assessment of effectiveness will begin to unfold. Are we aimed at where we can most likely defeat the enemy? Are our strengths oriented on his weaknesses?

Phase 4 is the collection and interweaving of statistical and reported effectiveness indicators. The intent is to gather as much information as possible on measures of effectiveness that are used in the field, then to compare perspectives and analyze contexts to draw conclusions as to the value of each proposed measure.

Phase 5 compared the stated measures of effectiveness with the missions assigned and the role of the military in the context of the overall effort. Measures of effectiveness were reviewed for objectivity, appropriateness, and interrelationships.

To support the research materials available locally, it was necessary to go to the field to fill some gaps. In this effort, a list of questions was mailed to the following agencies that are in involved in counterdrug operations:

The Office of National Drug Control Policy

The Department of Justice

The Drug Enforcement Administration

The Federal Bureau of Investigation  
The Department of Defense  
Commander, Forces Command  
Commander in Chief, U.S. Southern Command  
Headquarters, North American Aerospace Defense  
Command

JTF-4

JTF-5

JTF-6

Operation Alliance

El Paso Intelligence Center

National Interagency Counterdrug Institute

California State Police

Florida State Police

New Mexico State Police

Texas State Police

The memorandums, included at Appendix A and B, were intended to get opinions and perspectives from the field as well as obtain data. Much of the information sent was used and is incorporated into the thesis bibliography.

Although there are many mathematical formulas and statistical measures used to study drug interdiction, there is no one particular model or other assessment tool into which the issue of this thesis fits. Therefore, the final result of this effort is to attempt to frame an answer to

the research question in terms of success or failure of the operations in the context of the mission, the level of war, and the resulting impact on the overall counterdrug effort. This research should help clear some more of the fog that shrouds appropriate methods of assessing the effectiveness of military operations in the national "War on Drugs."

#### Summary

The issue of military involvement in counterdrug operations is a complex one. There are many facets to the problem that have previously been studied. In the following chapter, the consequential literature that currently exists is reviewed to establish a baseline of existing knowledge and positions.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>George Bush, National Security Strategy of the United States, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993), 1.

<sup>2</sup>Colin L. Powell, GEN, National Military Strategy of the United States, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1992), 15.

<sup>3</sup>Office of National Drug Control Policy, Breaking the Cycle of Drug Abuse: 1993 Interim National Drug Control Strategy, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993), 6.

<sup>4</sup>R. L. Durden, Role of the Military in the Drug War: Have We Exceeded Congressional Intent? (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1992), 55.

<sup>5</sup>Clarence I. Meeks III (USMC), "Illegal Law Enforcement: Aiding Civil Authorities in Violation of the Posse Comitatus Act," Military Law Review 70 (1975): 86.



## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Much has been written about countering illicit drugs and military cooperation in the effort. A study of the literature indicates that there is information available across the spectrum of sources. Included are books, periodicals, government transcripts of testimony, government reports, Department of Defense publications, and other government documents. Additionally, there are several research papers by other military authors from the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS), the Army War College, the Navy War College, and the Air War College. In addition to sources discovered through research requests from the Combined Arms Research Library (CARL) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and through the author's own file search, there exists an annotated bibliography from the Army-Air Force Center for Low Intensity Conflict (CLIC) containing 194 entries relevant to the subject. Several official publications provide regulatory, doctrinal, and procedural information that complements published national strategies and implements Department of Defense directives and public laws.

### Books

The books available through CARL provide some of the needed historical background and other factual and descriptive data required to understand the genesis of military cooperation in the counterdrug effort. Many of these references are written by civilian authors and deal with the issue of controlling drug trafficking in general. They provide insight into the political sensitivity of the issue and describe the various methods in use in the law enforcement arena.

Drugs, International Security and U.S. Public Policy is a valuable collection of articles and presentations presented at Tufts University in early 1989.<sup>1</sup> Several of the articles deal with the national and international politics of illegal drug trafficking and how our foreign policy is affected. Other articles deal with the structure of crime organizations, the markets in which they deal, and the law enforcement efforts used to counter them. Finally, there is discussion on options for U.S. policy and how the fight is one of interdiction outside U.S. borders and also one of education and social change at home.

Peter Reuter has written several works on behalf of the Rand Corporation dealing with the problem of trying to seal our immense borders from illegal trafficking. He deals both with military efforts and the overall picture. Additonally, he provides a good description of the

organization and functions of the drug markets that the trafficking supports.<sup>2</sup>

Trafficking, by Berkeley Rice, provides a detailed, true life account of a sophisticated cocaine smuggling ring that was broken up in the mid-1980s.<sup>3</sup> Desperados, by Elaine Shannon, is another factual account of the brutality of the South American cocaine rings that vividly portrays the depth and effect of their corruption of local governments.<sup>4</sup>

The Handbook of Research on the Illicit Drug Traffic, compiled by LaMond Tullis, provides more background on the traffickers themselves and on efforts to interdict.<sup>5</sup> He provides a detailed description of the methods used by traffickers to gain and secure their positions within their countries that allow them to operate. He describes their ability to control local politics and law enforcement and provides details on their methods of control and persuasion. Tullis continues with descriptions of methods that have been tried to counter the traffickers. He finishes with an extensive annotated bibliography that provides innumerable leads into other areas.

In studying the threat, or the organizations and operations that engage in drug trafficking, these references will help with information on the economic, cultural, and political backgrounds of the people involved and how they relate to our own culture as a nation.

There are several good works that focus on specific historical events that are part of the military's history in this field. They include detailed descriptions of U.S. operations in the Andes Mountains' coca growing regions conducted in concert with the governments of Peru and Brazil.<sup>6</sup> Also included is Thomas Donnelly's book on Operation Just Cause which describes what is regarded as America's largest military operation in support of the fight against illegal drugs.<sup>7</sup> The tactics described are not so much germane as they represent the far end of the spectrum of possible applications of power. What is significant is how the operation ties to and demonstrates a growing national resolve to fight the drug war.

#### Government Documents

Government documents, as one might expect, are plentiful concerning this topic. There are several volumes of Congressional testimony concerning the effectiveness of the counterdrug efforts of all agencies involved.<sup>8</sup> These documents describe in detail the plans and programs in use and under consideration to combat this threat. The testimonial transcripts detail the descriptions of those involved and reflect their attitudes and those of the Congressmen through the types of questions asked and answered. These documents provide real time, factual assessments of the counterdrug efforts. Government agency

reports are also available on this topic.<sup>9</sup> Much time and effort have been put into documenting resources spent and their resultant effects in the always difficult battle for resources.

There are two primary sources of information and opinion on the topic of military counterdrug operations. They are reports from the General Accounting Office that were published in 1993<sup>10</sup> and a report published by DOD of a comprehensive review, also conducted in 1993.<sup>11</sup> These documents are discussed at length later in this thesis.

Much of what the military is charged with in the counterdrug effort is contained in other government publications produced by the Executive Branch, the Department of Defense, and the military services. Many U.S. field manuals, strategy reviews, Department of Defense directives, and teaching documents reflect the current growing interest in this conflict and military thinking about how to achieve success.<sup>12</sup>

The Office of National Drug Control Strategy has published an annual report for the past four years. These reports provide an excellent chronology of the overall strategy and show from a national perspective how the military effort fits in.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, a comprehensive review for the period 1989-1992 has been published, providing the administration's view of progress.<sup>14</sup> This time period coincides with the first few years following the

Congressional mandate for more active Department of Defense involvement in the effort. This document provides some insight into perceptions of the effect of the military. Review of these documents shows somewhat of a bell curve effect. In other words, the 1989 document discusses military operations very generally. This is followed in the next three years with more detailed discussion in the document of the Defense Department role. Interestingly, the Clinton administration published an interim document that has strong language in support of continued interdiction efforts but is conspicuously devoid of any mention of the military role in that effort. Subsequent to this document, the President published his 1994 National Drug Control Strategy. Along with an adjusted budget, this document represents a major shift in priority from heavy emphasis on supply reduction toward more balance with demand reduction. Again, specific references to the military role are conspicuously absent from this document.<sup>15</sup>

Bulletins produced by the Center for Army Lessons Learned at Fort Leavenworth in 1991 and 1993 reflect important documentation from the field.<sup>16</sup> These reports and similar documents from the National Guard provide needed nuts and bolts information for units to review prior to conducting counterdrug missions. They also provide insight as to the complexity and challenge faced by the supporting units.

An interesting trend exists in the publications of the Department of Defense and the services. Counterdrug operations are addressed in the latest Army doctrinal how to fight manual, Field Manual 100-5, in the most recent military strategy review, and in many other places. As with other military missions and developments, this documentation is beginning to find its way down from the high level strategy proclamations to manuals that give concrete guidance on the conduct of operations.<sup>17</sup>

The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, has released a draft of Joint Publication 3-07.4 titled Joint Counterdrug Operations, dated 21 March 1993. This publication is a comprehensive overview of the environment to include the general threat and friendly organizations involved, operating principles, points of contact, and more. Additionally, the Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) released TRADOC Pam 525-56, titled Military Operations Planners Guide for Military Operations Other Than War, in September of 1993. This manual provides some guidance to those involved in planning counterdrug missions for military units.

#### Periodicals

Articles in available periodicals are much more focused on specific aspects of the counterdrug effort. They

range from descriptions of the organizations and communications networks to details of specific operations. They include perspectives from primarily the civilian side of the effort but include the contributions of the military.<sup>18</sup>

### Military Writing

Research done by other military authors is relatively extensive over the past two to three years. There are some SAMS monographs dealing with military cooperation in the counterdrug effort. There is a wealth of material from War College level military authors that deals with many aspects of the problem.

The SAMS monographs deal primarily with the planning and conduct of the effort as military operations.<sup>19</sup> The common thread is the assertion that applying the principles of Army campaign planning to the drug interdiction effort will pay dividends in coordinating the efforts of these many different agencies.

Numerous pieces have emerged from the Army War College, the Naval War College, and the Air War College over the past few years. These range from studies of the overall objectives of our efforts to papers on very specific operations. They provide a wealth of information on many aspects of the issue. Many of them deal with explanations of the Posse Comitatus Act and its implications and



controversies. Many deal with brief sketches of the history of the military role in drug traffic interdiction but are primarily limited to 1990 and earlier in their scope. There are at least two papers that deal with measures of effectiveness and provide some insight into the DOD's own struggle with this issue.<sup>20</sup> The preponderance of the papers were written between 1989 and 1992, again, corresponding to that period of increased Dod involvement. The currency of these papers may indicate a growing interest at that level of military education for the enormous problem we face in this endeavor.

War College level authors tend to share the same basic assessment of the situation. They express faith that, employed appropriately and given sufficient, clear guidance, the military can make a significant contribution to the war on drugs. There are, however, differing opinions on whether those conditions required for success in fact have been provided.

The most significant single military author on the subject is COL (Retired) William Mendel. With COL (Retired) Murl Munger, he co-authored one of the most important documents on the subject. Campaign Planning and the Drug War, published for the Army War College Strategic Studies Institute in 1991, contains the essence of the military approach to conducting counterdrug operations as part of an overall campaign and was a basis for Joint Publication

3-07.4.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, COL(R) Mendel has published and written other articles dealing with the nature of the counterdrug effort as it relates to interagency coordination and joint operations.<sup>22</sup>

### Trends

There are several trends in the available literature despite the recent development of the subject. There is a keen interest on the part of our Congressmen and other government officials in the very subject of this thesis. There are numerous requests for data and information that manifest themselves in General Accounting Office reports, transcripts of testimony, and in other agency reports. Interest at this level is clearly understandable in light of the huge budget involved--the most quantifiable indicator of resource support for the program. The Department of Defense documented responses carry a tone of optimism and perceived success. Some military authors, however, appear to hold a more skeptical view of military success in interesting contrast to Department of Defense official positions.

Non-military authors appear to have a mixed view of our success and the impact of military cooperation. There is evidence of both support and commitment to the military effort as well as skepticism as to its effectiveness. The recurring theme appears to be the higher the level, the more

positive the perceptions with the notable exception of the General Accounting Office.

There are several areas lacking in available literature. Missing is any clear description of missions and intents for military operations. As well, task, conditions and standards for military counterdrug operations are not on the shelf as we are accustomed to finding for standard tactical missions. Requests were sent to various agencies and organizations as described in Chapter Three to try to obtain these pieces. Also missing is any one clear description of the enemy as we are used to seeing in the intelligence estimate of most good G-2s. This data was also requested but denied due to classification of the information.

### Summary

The primary foundations for contextual framework will be the historical references coupled with current legal, strategic and doctrinal edicts from the government. Current reports, testimony and other documentation of performance, coupled with other research media to be discussed in the next chapter, will formulate the basis for the assessment of effectiveness. This compilation of information and analysis will serve, in the form of this thesis, as an initial comprehensive study of our effectiveness so far and may act as a gauge for

others, either academically or in practical application, to debate the value of military involvement in counterdrug operations.

### Endnotes

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### CHAPTER 3

#### THE ENVIRONMENT

The conditions under which the counterdrug effort developed as a national priority and today involves U.S. military forces are many and varied. It is important to understand the background of the effort in terms of history and its associated political and legal ramifications. The considerations and decisions that brought the Department of Defense so heavily into the counterdrug world were instrumental in the development of the military role today. It is equally important to gain an appreciation of the threat organization and capabilities, particularly as a frame of reference within which to begin assessing the military effort to counter it.

With these two pieces in place, the final aspect of understanding the current counterdrug environment is to study the national strategy and the organization established to accomplish its goals. As stated before, this is a complex undertaking by many different agencies. It is important to realize where the military fits into the big picture in order to gain perspective on its effectiveness.



## History

The first historical aspect of military participation in the counterdrug effort that bears review is the legal status of federal forces in regard to civil law enforcement in the United States. This issue dates back to the years prior to the American Revolution when the British Army was used in the colonies to keep the citizens in line. The Boston Massacre of 1770, during which colonists were killed by British troops during a civil disturbance, heightened American sensitivity to the use of standing armies for law enforcement to the point that it was a major topic of debate at the Constitutional Convention, though no specific prohibitions were enacted at the time.<sup>1</sup>

Following the Civil War, the Congress of the United States developed policies of Reconstruction in the South aimed at properly restoring the Union. Many of these oppressive policies were enforced by federal troops empowered to act as law enforcement in the southern states. The "last straw" was reached during the Presidential Election of 1876 during which Army troops were used to guard the polling places and to control the conduct of the election. So incensed were the people and the politicians that in 1878 the Congress passed and the President signed the Posse Comitatus Act which severely restricted the use of federal troops for civil law enforcement in this country.<sup>2</sup>

The current form of the law reads as follows:

Whoever, except in cases and under circumstances expressly authorized by the Constitution or Act of Congress, willfully uses any part of the Army or the Air Force as a posse comitatus or otherwise to execute the laws shall be fined not more than \$10,000 or imprisoned not more than two years, or both.<sup>3</sup>

The effect of the law was to make the use of troops for law enforcement activity subject to greater scrutiny and control. That scrutiny would occur more than 100 years later in regard to the nation's drug crisis.

In the 1970s, the call went out for action against what the nation finally recognized as a severe threat to our very existence as a society. In the early part of the decade, drug abuse and addiction were referred to as health problems that had associated with it a certain degree of victimless crime.<sup>4</sup> By the mid-1970s, however, the depth and seriousness of the problem began to take hold. Public opinion was mounting against what were now the more recognizable aspects of the problem. The crime associated with drugs was no longer viewed as victimless. It was recognized as violent and pervasive. Concurrently, there was a renewed recognition of the blatant intrusion of the drug traffickers into our nation. It was this intrusion that focused attention to the problem as a national security issue and prompted the calls for more military involvement.

Significant constraint, however, was imposed by Posse Comitatus. In 1981, a review of that law resulted in

significant clarification in regard to what the military could do in the counterdrug effort. Those renewed provisions are:

1. The military may loan equipment, facilities, and personnel.

2. Military personnel may operate military equipment used in monitoring and communicating the movement of air and sea traffic.

3. Military personnel may operate military equipment in support of law enforcement agencies in an interdiction role overseas only if a joint declaration of emergency, signed by the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and Attorney General, states that a serious threat to U.S. interests exists.

4. The military may not conduct searches, seizures, or make arrests (even when an emergency declaration is in effect).

5. Use of the military cannot adversely impact on readiness.<sup>5</sup>

This review, known as Public Law 97-86, seemed to open the door for the use of the great capabilities of the military to assist in the counterdrug fight. There are two important points to note, however. First, it is clear in the text above that the military role is to be one of support to the effort already in progress. Second, the military is expressly prohibited from conducting searches, seizures or arrests--all the actions required to bring successful interdiction to completion.

During the 1980s, the military participated in counterdrug operations as directed but the mission was still not a high priority for the Defense Department. Operations

were conducted at relatively low levels initially, with the majority of missions involving ground, sea and air based radars in support of target detection. The elements of the national strategy, at the time, did not directly address military involvement as a key player.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger was not sold on the appropriateness of the mission. He characterized military counterdrug operations as "very dangerous and undesirable."<sup>7</sup> The most visible link of the military to the counterdrug effort was the formation of the National Narcotics Border Interdiction System (NNBIS) in 1983 under the Vice President of the United States. It was the first effort to formalize any integration of military and civilian resources.<sup>8</sup>

The tempo picked up in 1986 with Operation Blast Furnace in which U.S. Army helicopters operated in Bolivia in support of Drug Enforcement Administration agents and Bolivian police. Cocaine processing sites in Bolivia were targeted for destruction in an attempt to dismantle the drug supply at its origin. The operation was deemed a limited tactical success, but it sent a clear signal to the American people and to other South American countries that the United States meant business.<sup>9</sup> In similar police support operations, the U.S. also sent helicopters to the Bahamas in that same year.

By the latter half of the 1980s political sensitivity to the problem began to increase rapidly. There

was ever-increasing pressure to engage the full force of the military, within legal constraints, against this threat to national security. The Defense Department, however, remained skeptical, viewing the mission as one for which it was not suited and one it could not win. In 1988 and 1989 there was significant debate in Congress over the military role. The Department of Defense had been given instructions to get involved but was still not fully committed. The DOD's unwillingness to dig in combined with the ongoing debates resulted in significant, concrete actions affecting military involvement in counterdrug operations. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1988 and 1989 required the Department of Defense to report to Congress on support it rendered to the counterdrug effort. The prevailing opinion in Congress at the time was that the military must be more involved in the effort.<sup>10</sup>

The Congressional outlook was mirrored in 1989 by the Bush administration strategy to fight the drug problem. In his 1989 National Drug Control Strategy, President Bush specified and integrated the Defense Department roles and responsibilities much more clearly.<sup>11</sup> Also significant in this year was the turnaround of opinion in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Secretary Richard Cheney was positive about the mission and the potential impact that the military could have on the problem. In September 1989 he remarked:

The Department of Defense is an enthusiastic participant in the nation's drug control effort. We have significant resources at our disposal. We can make a substantial contribution to our national effort if we use our assets intelligently and efficiently.<sup>12</sup>

This represented a giant change from the attitudes of the past two Secretaries of Defense as well as a sign of breakthrough in cooperation. Secretary Cheney issued very specific instructions on the nature of the mission in his September 18, 1989, guidance concerning implementation of the President's strategy.<sup>13</sup> On that same day, he issued orders to the commanders of Unified and Specified Combatant Commands, and specifically to the Commanders-in-Chief of the Forces Command, Southern Command, Atlantic, Pacific, and North American Aerospace Defense Command.<sup>14</sup> His orders, with less than a 30-day suspense, were to prepare plans for significant actions in support of the counterdrug effort. Thus, the specific inclusion of the military in the national counterdrug fight was formalized. The Department of Defense was named the lead federal agency for detection and monitoring of illegal trafficking into the United States, as well as a support asset for other types of counterdrug operations.

From this point on, the Defense Department has played a more constant and significant role in the counterdrug effort. Each of the Commanders in Chief (CINC's) mentioned above devotes significant resources to the mission. CINCSOUTH has the preponderance of missions

outside the United States along with some naval operations conducted by CINCLANT and CINCPAC. Three of the commanders, CINCFORSCOM, CINCLANT and CINCPAC organized standing Joint Task Force (JTF) headquarters to facilitate planning and coordination with supported law enforcement agencies. (These organizations are described in more detail in later sections.) All have specified missions to support counterdrug operations.

The Andean Strategy also evolved in this banner year of 1989. This strategy was intended to continue what had been started in Operation Blast Furnace, that is, to take the fight to the origin of the problem in the South American countries by destroying coca plants in the fields.<sup>15</sup> Again, results were mixed. There was some tactical success in destroying the fields. There was great success in coordinating among the different countries involved which resulted in increased stability on the continent through a shared cause as well as, again, sending a clear signal of resolve. The Andean Strategy continues today, incorporating various operations throughout Central and South America.<sup>16</sup>

Following the initial formation of the drug fighting JTFs, their involvement has grown significantly, affecting military units from platoon to battalion size on the Southwest United States border and carrier task groups in the Caribbean Sea, Gulf of Mexico, and the Pacific Ocean.

Operating tempo, in some cases, increased six fold in terms of tactical missions executed over the past four years.<sup>17</sup>

Since the President's 1989 National Drug Control Strategy, the military has been deeply and directly involved on a constant basis in the fight to protect our nation from the evils of illegal drugs and all the social ills that come with them. In the next portion of this background study, the threat we have come to face is the centerpiece. It is important to understand what we are fighting against to understand and assess the results.

### The Threat

Of primary importance to any commander's analysis of the mission he is given is an in-depth study of the enemy he faces. Again, for purposes of this thesis discussion will center on the cocaine traffic from South America. The following passages provide only a glimpse into the violence and complexity of the threat.

Christian Century Magazine, June 1993: A Roman Catholic cardinal from Mexico was shot and killed May 25 in what some observers believe was a drug-related assassination. First reports out of Guadalajara, Mexico, suggested that Cardinal Juan Jesus Posadas Ocampo was caught in the middle of a shootout between warring drug traffickers at the city's international airport. However, according to the most recent press accounts, the slaying may have been carried out deliberately to silence Posadas and warn other outspoken critics of drug traffickers.<sup>18</sup>

U.S. News and World Report, December 1990: Under cover of darkness, a dozen smugglers and a train of 40 pack horses carrying 4,391 pounds of cocaine rode into



the outskirts of Nogales, a hilly Arizona border town. When Border patrol agents surprised the convoy, a bandit opened up with a high-powered rifle. The U.S. agents returned fire and called in reinforcements. Luckily, no one was hurt. But the irony wasn't lost on Jose Marrufo, the Border Patrol's head man in Nogales. "Kind of like the old West, isn't it?" he says.<sup>19</sup>

The Washington Post National Weekly Edition, November 1993: ...over the past two years, because of tougher U.S. banking law enforcement and other factors, (Colombian drug cartels) have been sending about half of their cash back to Colombia - an estimated \$5 billion to \$7 billion annually, according to investigators.<sup>20</sup>

Brutal. Sophisticated. Adaptable. All these terms, and many more, can be used to describe the people involved in the trafficking of illegal drugs. Most of the details of intelligence on current drug traffickers is understandably classified. For purposes of this study, however, it is important to provide a general overview of the structure, operations, capabilities, limitations and vulnerabilities of the drug trafficking organizations.

The 1992 National Drug Control Strategy provides a good overview of the organization of drug trafficking.<sup>21</sup> It describes basically three levels of organization. First are the core organizations which are the root of the network. They are highly centralized and operate internationally. They coordinate and oversee all phases of the business from production to distribution. The drug cartels of South America fall into this category. Next are the secondary organizations which fulfill, often on a contractual basis, the different functions of the overall operation such as

transportation, money laundering, or regional distribution. They operate independently of one another and, therefore, have little mutual impact. Finally are the local organizations. They consist mostly of low and mid-level dealers who execute the distribution functions on a local basis. A diagram of the drug trafficking organizations might look something like this:

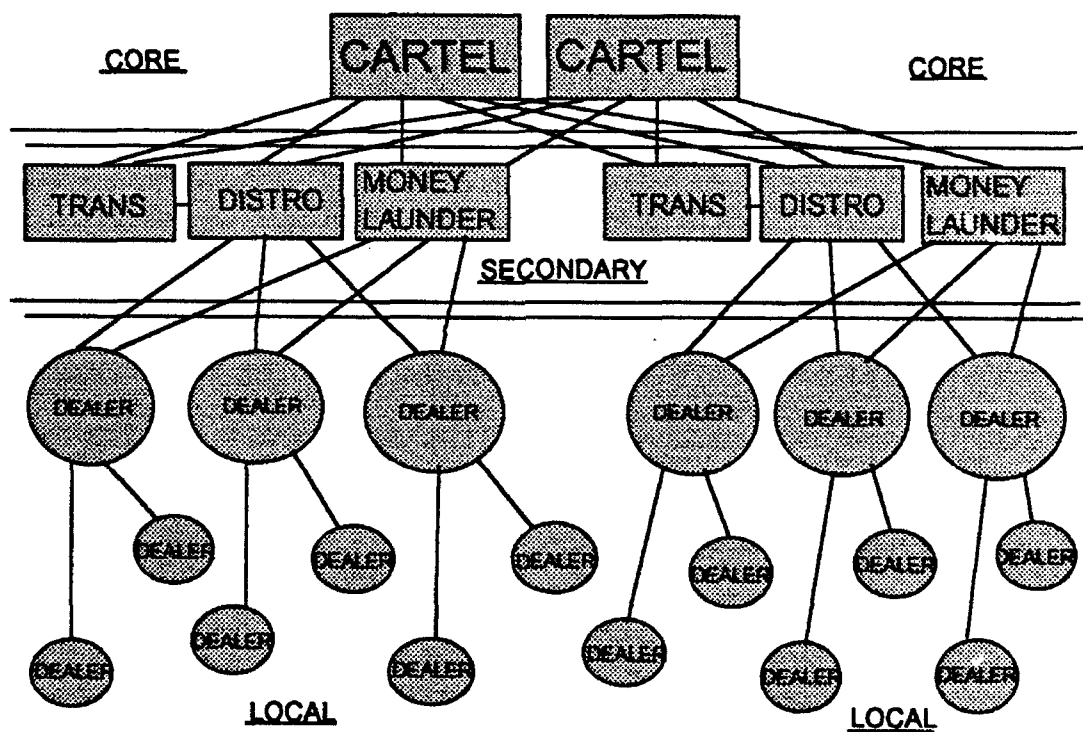


Fig. 1: Trafficking Net

It is the core and secondary organizations against which U.S. military power has been directed. Cocaine primarily originates in Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia. The

processing of coca leaves into paste and the transportation of the drugs, however, takes place in numerous other countries of the region. It is those production and processing facilities, as well as the controlling members of the core organizations themselves, that are the targets of U.S. assisted national police efforts. Targeting the transportation functions of the secondary organizations is the central focus for the U.S. military role in interdiction.

The cocaine cartels of South America exert incredible influence over the economies and politics of the region. Over the past 20 years, the predominant forces have been the Medellin and Cali Cartels of Colombia. These organizations are run in a very businesslike manner and are shrouded in secrecy and security. Recently, with the death of Medellin Cartel leader Pablo Escobar, the Cali Cartel has emerged as the dominant force of the region. These organizations exert their influence through bribery and violent terrorism. The extent of their influence ranges into the depths of local and national politics, making it extremely difficult for legitimate law enforcement efforts to succeed. Cartels employ their own para-military type forces to protect themselves and to enforce policy. And they are so incredibly rich from the profits of their business that they are extremely adaptable to most measures to defeat their operations.

The secondary organizations, as previously described, are many and varied. Currently, military capability is targeted at the transportation function these organizations provide. The transportation of drugs from production to importation into the U.S. involves many sophisticated steps. Several years ago, the primary trafficking routes were over water and in the air through the Caribbean and into Florida or other Gulf coast states. Successful interdiction of those routes by law enforcement, supported by U.S. military, caused a shift in procedures and routes used by the smugglers.<sup>22</sup> As a result, Mexico has become a favorite stopover point on the new routes through the U.S. southwest border.

Today, a typical scenario goes something like this. A small, light aircraft takes off from a remote strip near a Colombian processing plant. The pilot turns north toward Mexico and drops to within 100 feet of the surface. He flies an irregular course on his route to his destination somewhere in Mexico. There he lands and unloads his cargo of drugs for the next leg of the trip. The next carrier loads the cargo into a car and drives to a point near the intended crossing sites. At a linkup point, he meets with several armed bandits equipped with horses who will pack the drugs over open desert into the border town of Nogales, Arizona. Once safely across the border, the drugs are distributed by local organizations.

The scenario could very easily have included small watercraft penetrating coastal borders or large commercial shipping containers and trucks passing through normal border customs checkpoints. The lessons are the same. The traffickers use a variety of routes and means to smuggle drugs into the United States. The existence of many secondary organizations makes it difficult to inflict lasting damage on the total smuggling effort without constant vigilance.

After the drugs are sold, the money must be laundered and/or carried back out of the United States and into the country where the core organizations are headquartered. Though not a focus for military operations, it is interesting to note the complexity of this operation. It involves billions of dollars annually that is processed through banking facilities in the U.S. and many foreign countries. The money laundering aspect of the business is a target for law enforcement officials to target.

This very brief and cursory treatment of the threat situation is by no means intended to unlock the secret to success in the counterdrug effort. It should, however, provide a baseline understanding of the complexity, sophistication, and adaptability of the enemy. Drug traffickers are no easy target and the redundancy and lack of patterned response and behavior make the assessment of countermeasures extremely difficult at best.

With a basic understanding of the history of the issue and the threat description, the last piece of background information needed to understand military effectiveness to date is the friendly situation. This final portion of the description of the operational environment will center on how the military is organized and operating in support of the national strategy.

### Friendly Situation

There are several important aspects of our current situation that are important to understand in evaluating the military role in the counterdrug effort. First is the National Drug Control Strategy and where the Defense Department fits into the overall plan. Next is the mission that has been assigned to the DOD as well as the missions assigned to the subordinate commands. Following that is the organizational structure in which we are currently formed to carry out the missions assigned and how that structure coordinates with the other non-military agencies involved in the fight. Finally, this will lead to a discussion of the types of operations currently being performed by military units in the field.

The National Drug Control Strategy is based on two fundamental pillars. (1) reduction of the demand for illegal drugs by the citizens of the United States and (2) reduction of the supply of those drugs. Demand

reduction includes those efforts and programs aimed at reducing drug addiction through treatment, counseling, education, and other socially oriented programs. Supply reduction, on the other hand, are those programs and activities geared toward destruction of the drugs, dismantling the trafficking organizations, interdicting the flow into the United States, eradication of in-country supplies, and arrest and prosecution of distributors and dealers.<sup>23</sup>

The mission of the United States military is included in the guidance issued in 1989 by Secretary of Defense Cheney to the Commanders of the Unified and Specified Combatant Commands:

The detection and countering of the production, trafficking and use of illegal drugs is a high priority national security mission of the Department of Defense.<sup>24</sup>

That same mission orientation is echoed three years later in the 1992 National Military Strategy:

The detection and significant reduction of the production and trafficking of illegal drugs is a high priority national security mission of our armed forces. The President and the Secretary of Defense have directed that we deal with this threat as a danger to our security. Under the President's National Drug Strategy, we are charged to help lead the attack on the supply of illegal drugs from abroad.<sup>25</sup>

Although the military has made significant in-house accomplishments in demand reduction among service members and civilian employees and thereby serves as a model for

other institutions, it is on the supply reduction side of the strategy that the military effort is mostly placed.

Essential to a clear picture of the military role in this strategy is to consider the level in which military operations fit. The Army's doctrinal manual, Field Manual 100-5, describes three levels of war: tactical, operational, and strategic. The strategic level "is concerned with national or, in specific cases, alliance or coalition objectives. The operational level provides the vital link between strategic objectives and tactical employment of forces."<sup>26</sup> "The tactical level of war is concerned with the execution of battles and engagements."<sup>27</sup> In a declared war, the military clearly has the lead in determining the strategy of the conflict, then putting together the operations to achieve the strategic goals. In the counterdrug effort, however, the military role is one of support. The military does not lead the strategy, nor does it even totally control the operational and tactical employment of its capabilities. In the counterdrug effort, the military is part of the team, designated to support.

The military role is clear at the tactical level. Units receive missions and execute them in accordance with the time, place, and purpose included in their orders. At the operational level, tactical actions are tied together by regional CINCs and other commanders as much as is possible within the control constraints posed by the support nature



of the military role. Unlike conventional war, the military commander does not exercise complete authority over how and when his units will be employed. The interagency support role takes over at this juncture and the operational design is a cooperative one with law enforcement agencies in the lead role. In the transition from the operational to strategic level, the military fades even farther from the lead. Strategic decisions and design are clearly in the hands of law enforcement and other civilian federal agencies. The Department of Defense, again in the support role, offers its many capabilities and resources but is not the controlling agent. This clarification of levels of war is vital to all remaining discussion.

The organizational structure the Defense Department has established to command and control its counterdrug effort follows the pattern of most military organizations. At Dod level, there is a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Drug Enforcement Policy and Support to execute staff coordination at the Department level. He serves under the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict. Additionally, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency supports development of badly needed counterdrug technology.

Directly below the Department of Defense level are the CINCs who are charged with planning and executing the military missions required. They are the Commanders in

Chief of U.S. Atlantic Command, U.S. Pacific Command, North American Aerospace Defense Command, and U.S. Southern Command. The first three conduct their operations primarily in support of interdicting traffickers attempting to illegally cross into the United States. U.S. Southern Command conducts the majority of the operations in Central and South American countries in support of U.S. and host nation law enforcement efforts.

Within U.S. Atlantic Command there are two subordinate JTF headquarters that conduct the military liaison and coordination with civilian law enforcement agencies and command and control the military forces during counterdrug operations. Under Forces Command, the Army component of U.S. Atlantic Command, is JTF-6, located in El Paso, Texas. The Southwest border of the United States with Mexico is the area of operations for JTF-6. Directly under U.S. Atlantic Command is JTF-4, located at Key West, Florida. The Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico is the primary area of operations for JTF-4. Finally, under U.S. Pacific Command is JTF-5, located in Alameda, California. The Pacific coast of the United States is the primary area of operations for JTF-5. North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) provides radar coverage of all approaches to the United States through its in-place early warning radars to detect illegal airborne entry. U.S. Southern Command employs the Counternarcotics Operations Center as its staff



it is appropriate to review the mission statements of these organizations as they pertain to counterdrug operations.

U.S. Southern Command

1. Provide support to reinforce cooperating host nations.
2. Coordinate aerial and maritime detection and monitoring of drug production and trafficking.
3. Provide operational support to US LEAs (Law Enforcement Agencies) and host nation forces.
4. Provide non-operational support to US LEAs and host nation forces.<sup>29</sup>

JTF-4

1. Conduct operations to detect and monitor aircraft/surface vessels suspected of smuggling illegal drugs into the United States.
2. Integrate effectively into the anti-drug communications and intelligence network.
3. Coordinate detection and monitoring activities of the other federal agencies.<sup>30</sup>

## JTF-6

Plans and coordinates all DOD Title 10 support that is requested by federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies within the southwest border region.<sup>31</sup>

The important elements in these mission statements are: detecting, monitoring, supporting, and integrating. Equally important is the absence of any reference to searches, seizures, or arrests--those activities that are expressly forbidden by law. This latter point becomes pivotal in later assessments of effectiveness.

Each of these organizations functions at the tactical and operational levels of war in executing its assigned missions. To do so each must first coordinate with U.S. agencies outside DOD and then with the military units that have been designated to conduct specific operations. To do this, both U.S. Southern Command and JTF-4 have representatives of agencies such as the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Department of Transportation, and State Department collocated in their headquarters. In the case of JTF-6, a formalized, interagency organization known as Operation Alliance is collocated with the JTF headquarters to initially receive and assess support requests from the federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies on the Southwest Border. Through these ties, many of the initial coordination challenges between military and civilian organizations have been met.

The types of operations performed by the units in support of these headquarters and the military capabilities they bring to the effort are many and varied. It is necessary to review what these operations are at this point to insure a clear understanding of the nature of the missions and their parameters. The operations summarized below are conducted both in the United States and in host countries of Central and South America.

1. Detection and monitoring of suspected narcotraffickers in the air, on the sea, and on the ground. These missions are accomplished through networks of ground-based, airborne and seaborne radars, combined with movement sensors and direct observation. Targets are tracked during movement and handed off to law enforcement officials for apprehension.

2. Reconnaissance from the air and on the ground of areas suspected of being in use by drug traffickers or producers. Intelligence developed from these missions is forwarded to law enforcement for action.

3. Deterrence operations, consisting normally of units conducting routine training exercises in force in areas that are suspected to be used by drug organizations, thereby denying the use of that terrain.

4. Intelligence analysis and support involving military intelligence analysts and linguists working

together with other agency intelligence personnel to strengthen the intelligence effort.

5. Eradication of drug plant growing areas. This is done mostly in the U.S. against marijuana targets. U.S. forces also support host nation police in the coca growing regions of South America.

6. Providing air transportation for law enforcement personnel and equipment. This includes primarily helicopter support both in the U.S. and in South American countries.

7. Training of law enforcement personnel on military skills and tactics that can be used in law enforcement operations. Examples are weapons marksmanship, rappelling, and small unit tactics.

8. Engineering support ranging from road maintenance to limited facilities construction.

9. Canine support in the form of drug-sniffing dogs to assist and speed vehicle and container searches.

10. Communications support to enhance command and control and information/data base development and dissemination.

Of the types of support listed above, again, there is no mention of soldiers conducting searches, seizures, or arrests. The first three missions are those that get the closest to the enemy and they are designed primarily to develop tactical level intelligence for law enforcement to act on and to canalize the movements of the smugglers.

Close liaison among the coordinating staffs, the units conducting the operations, and the civilian agencies involved is critical to success throughout the conduct of each mission. Each staff has 24-hour command and control facilities that maintain contact with units in the field and with the supported agencies. Needless to say, the mechanisms are very different for each staff based on the primary methods employed, the geographical regions covered, the involvement of other nations, and the speed at which operations take place. Additionally, each of these coordinating staff operations centers is tied to the other to facilitate hand-off of detected targets. For example, JTF-4's radar tracking assets are linked to those of U.S. Southern Command, allowing an aerial target initially identified over Colombia to be tracked into the Caribbean then back into Mexico. Through coordination with JTF-6, then, the target, should it present the appropriate profile, can be passed to units or law enforcement agencies operating along the southwest border for interdiction.

This level of coordination capability did not exist in 1989 when the Department of Defense entered the counterdrug arena in earnest. It is still not perfect today although it represents tremendous improvement over the mid-1980s capabilities.<sup>32</sup>



### Summary

The background discussion provided in this chapter is intended to set the stage for further study of the effectiveness of the military in counterdrug operations. To fully appreciate the following discussion of effectiveness it is necessary to understand how the military came to get involved as it is today. It is also necessary to understand the threat as it exists and to understand the methods and organizations used to combat it. Also important to remember is the military's role in the overall national strategy, the missions assigned to the military by the federal authorities, and the constraints imposed by law on the actions of the military. This is the context in which effectiveness will next be examined.

## Endnotes

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<sup>16</sup>Robert E. Harmon, LTC, LTC Ramon A Malave, LTCDR Charles A. Miller, III, and CPT William K. Nadolski, "Counterdrug Assistance: The Number One Priority." Military Review Vol LXXIII, March 1993, 26-35.

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## CHAPTER 4

### MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Significant controversy surrounds the question of how effective the military has been in its counterdrug efforts. Central to the issue is measuring effectiveness in terms that meet the needs of those involved in the various aspects of the effort. Resource managers and decision makers want very quantifiable descriptions of effectiveness. Terms such as numbers of arrests, tonnage of drugs seized, and street price of drugs represent concrete data that meets the quantifiable need. When applied to the overall effort, however, these measures do not accurately highlight the success or failure that each agency experiences. In isolation, they also do not allow for the incredible intricacy and the uncertain nature of the problem. In the military case specifically, arrests and seizures are not legally possible at this time for the military forces involved, therefore, they cannot reasonably be used as a measure of military effectiveness. What, then, is the method by which military effectiveness should be assessed? A simple review of the definition of the word provides a return to basics from which further discussion will evolve.

The American Heritage Dictionary defines the word "effective" as follows: "(1) Having an intended or expected effect. (2) Producing or designed to produce the desired impression or response."<sup>1</sup>

In the opening chapter of this thesis, "effectiveness" was defined for discussion purposes as accomplishment of an assigned mission with resulting useful contribution to the overall counterdrug effort. The two definitions, in fact, are not very different. The problem is, however, that measuring effectiveness is a major point of controversy in the counterdrug community and specifically in discussion of the military counterdrug role. The background elements of the environment provided in Chapter 3 are important to keep in mind during the following analysis.

There is quite a variety of opinions and positions on how to measure the effectiveness of military operations in the counterdrug effort. The biggest problem appears to be an inability to agree on a method of measurement and then to consistently use it. This unwillingness grows out of uncertainty and disagreement over what the military role is and how it fits into the national strategy.

There are many different sources of analysis on military effectiveness in the counterdrug effort. It is not the purpose of this thesis to add any new or definitive measures to those that already exist. Instead, the intent is to examine some of those that are currently proposed for

their applicability in light of the missions assigned and the military counterdrug environment previously described. From this analysis, then, will come conclusions concerning the impact of military involvement in the counterdrug effort.

The effectiveness of the military is discussed and analyzed at many levels within the interested community. At the national level, the issue is the subject of Congressional testimony, Cabinet level staff work, and General Accounting Office investigations. Within the Defense Department, it is dealt with by CINC staffs, commanders of the drug fighting JTFs, and by commanders and staffs of the units conducting the missions. At the state level, civilian law enforcement as well as state governors provide insight to the assessment. Each of these parties looks at the issue somewhat differently from their respective positions. Their perspectives provide an interesting collage of options to consider.

Prior to discussing these options, it is prudent to review a few of the major points from Chapter 3 concerning the operating environment.

1. Congress assigned DOD the lead for detection and monitoring in 1989.

2. Federal military forces are legally prohibited from conducting searches, seizures, and arrests.

3. The military mission is one of support to law enforcement and some other agencies. The supported agency is in charge.

4. The military is operating at the tactical and operational level as a component of an overall national strategy.

With these considerations in mind, the discussion now turns to the options currently in use.

#### Criticism of Military Effectiveness

In a report to the House Committee on Government Operations filed in September 1993, the United States General Accounting Office (GAO) complained that:

...neither the DOD Drug Coordinator nor ONDCP (Office of National Drug Control Policy) has established quantified goals or effectiveness measures for the mission.<sup>2</sup>

In the perceived absence of any "quantified" goals or measures of effectiveness (MOE), the GAO applies the overarching drug flow reduction goals of the national strategy as a measure of the military contribution and arrives at some interesting conclusions.

September 1991: DOD's detection and monitoring efforts have not had a significant impact on the national goal of reducing drug supplies.

Later, in the same report: The addition of DOD's resources has significantly expanded the United States' national capabilities for detecting and monitoring cocaine traffic.



And: DOD's resources have contributed to drug seizures by expanding the coverage and allowing suspects to be detected close to South America, monitored continuously, and handed off to law enforcement agencies near expected arrival zones.<sup>3</sup>

September 1993: When assessed against these kinds of standards--supply reduction goals and interdiction success rates--the government's investment in military OPTEMPO does not appear to be providing a reasonable return.

Later, in the same report: At present, DOD's surveillance capabilities exceed the capabilities of law enforcement agencies to apprehend smugglers, especially in the countries that U.S.-bound cocaine transits.

And: DOD's flying hours and steaming days have contributed to increased cocaine seizures and other limited successes.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, in testimony to this same House committee, Mr. Louis J. Rodriguez, Director, Systems Development and Production Issues, National Security and International Affairs Division, GAO, concludes that

military surveillance has not demonstrated that it can make a contribution--to either drug interdiction or to the national goal of reduced drug supplies--that is commensurate with its cost.<sup>5</sup>

The comments in the GAO reports cited above are wrought with contradiction when viewed in light of the four operational points at the beginning of this chapter. To label the DOD detection and monitoring effort as a failure because there has not been a decrease in cocaine traffic represents a quantum leap in deductive reasoning. To conclude that there is no contribution to the interdiction effort is a simple contradiction. The key point, in fact,

is addressed in the same reports: the apprehension, arrest, and seizure components of interdiction are not keeping up with the significant increase in detection capability that the military supplies. The GAO conclusion that military surveillance efforts are not cost effective and, therefore, should be reduced could easily be replaced with the conclusion that the seizure and arrest mechanisms of interdiction must be increased to a capability commensurate with surveillance.

The root flaw in the GAO deduction is that, in the absence of the quantifiable measures of effectiveness desired, the conclusions drawn about the effectiveness of the military tactical and operational contributions are based on strategic goals.

The same flaw exists in a report prepared by the majority staffs of the Senate Judiciary Committee and the International Narcotics Control Caucus in April 1993. In this report, the following is offered as a "Major Lesson of the Past Four Years: The billions of dollars expended by the Pentagon in interdiction programs has availed us little in the way of reducing drug supplies."<sup>6</sup> Later, the report reveals that "significant gains (50%)--in terms of raw (cocaine) seizures--have been achieved."<sup>7</sup> Additionally, it says that "The flow of drugs into the United States is undiminished."<sup>8</sup> Again, this is a case where strategic

measures of effectiveness are applied to tactical and operational contributions.

There is other criticism of the GAO and Senate staff findings. The notion that undiminished drug flow is indicative of failure deserves reconsideration. In light of the amount of time (slightly over four years) since the 1989 directives and the immensity of the problem (international, spanning over 50 years) the fact that the drug flow has not, in fact, increased, should be considered an indicator of success or effectiveness in initially gaining control of the flow. To date, at least one major smuggling avenue, through the Caribbean and Florida, has been successfully denied the traffickers to the point that they shifted to another route through Mexico.<sup>9</sup> This shift should be viewed as a major success and should be motivation to increase the pressure and take away the next major avenue of approach. To advocate decreasing the pressure at this point is tantamount to admitting defeat in a ten round match after winning the first round. Stamina and conviction are required for the remaining nine rounds.

This negative assessment of the military's effectiveness represents the primary position of those who see little benefit or effect. The consensus of this thought is that a great deal of resources are committed to an effort that cannot be directly credited with a reduction of the supply of drugs into the United States. There are those,

however, who do see benefit in the military effort. For the most part, they are parties who are closer to the tactical and operational levels of the effort.

### Positive Indications of Effectiveness

Under the direction of the President, the Department of Defense completed its Comprehensive Review of the DOD Counterdrug Program and published its results in September 1993.

This review took a very programmatic approach to analyzing the military contribution to the overall counterdrug effort. In addressing the military role, the report categorizes military operations as fitting into four "Strategy Elements" of the overall program. They are Stopping the Flow, Source Nation Support, Dismantling Cartels, and Demand Reduction.<sup>10</sup> This discussion will focus on the Stopping the Flow element as that is where discussions of interdiction lie.

Within the element of Stopping the Flow, Dod offers four very clear criteria upon which to evaluate the program. These criteria function for all intents and purposes as measures of effectiveness. They are:

- Provides direct support that leads to major or regular seizures or arrests.

- Provides indirect support that leads to major or regular seizures or arrests.

- Deters trafficking through a defined geographic area and/or using a specific mode of transportation.

-Provides specific training and/or equipment that is required by LEAs to enhance their effectiveness in achieving major or regular seizures and arrests.<sup>11</sup>

Significantly, these criteria very closely reflect the wording of the missions that DOD has been given. They also very clearly reflect the support nature of the role of the military in the counterdrug effort. As such, they appropriately do not include the quantifiable goals desired by the GAO.

Much of the application of these criteria is subjective. Any objectivity the criteria may hold then becomes a function of the objectivity of the assessor. The assessment included in the review reveals great success in terms of direct assistance in seizing cocaine in the transit regions with a corresponding drop in detections. This is viewed as a sign of a major shift in smuggling routes and methods. The assessment also concedes much less quantifiable success in the southwest border region. However, the more subjective assessment from the law enforcement agencies is that the military support there is "vital" to their operations.<sup>12</sup> The report very clearly specifies the need for better non-intrusive container inspection technology to expand the interdiction of smuggling through legal ports of entry. Finally, the Dod report recognizes that there has been "no reduction evident in total cocaine production or supply to the U.S."<sup>13</sup> It

does not, however, assume responsibility for this not yet fulfilled strategic goal.

At the operational and tactical headquarters level there are yet other methods used to measure the effectiveness of the operations. These methods much more directly reflect the support nature of the missions and the concern with unit training value and readiness.

The United States Forces Command (FORSCOM) is the Army component of U.S. Atlantic Command. As such, FORSCOM commands the majority of Army forces stationed in the continental United States. These forces provide the majority of Army units for counterdrug missions. At FORSCOM headquarters level, effectiveness is viewed as a combination of things. The command is concerned with the record of seizures in a manner similar to that included in the Dod review. Additionally, it views the satisfaction of the supported law enforcement agency as an important measure of its effectiveness. This again is reflective of the support role the military holds in the overall counterdrug effort.

Lastly, the unit training benefit is considered an important aspect of effectiveness. This recognizes and prioritizes the legal guidance in Public Law 97-86 requiring military units to maintain their wartime mission readiness while conducting operations in support of the counterdrug effort. Succinctly phrased, today the command seeks

to support counterdrug missions which have a direct drug nexus, provide value added to the National Drug

Control Strategy, and provide training which supports military combat readiness.<sup>14</sup>

The subjectivity of these measures of effectiveness remains. Objectivity, however, is obtained to a certain degree through consideration of the satisfaction of the supported law enforcement agencies. The law enforcement agencies have the mission to seize and arrest. If they feel their mission was aided by the military unit in support, then their subjective evaluation may be used as objective input to assess effectiveness by the command.

At the next level down exists the only headquarters whose sole mission is to support the national counterdrug effort. This discussion of measuring effectiveness will focus on JTF-4 and JTF-6 as examples. JTF-5 has a similar mission as JTF-4 in a different area of operations. These commands use measures of effectiveness similar to that described for FORSCOM, however, they appear to collect data more actively and in a relatively formalized manner.

In looking at measures of effectiveness for JTF-4, whose mission is primarily focused on air and sea interdiction, specifically stated criteria were not found. The JTF staff did, however, provide a copy of an interview with the commander, Rear Admiral George N. Gee, in which he sites some specific accomplishments of his command.

Each year we sort through more than 95,000 air tracks and 4000 ship tracks to find the illicit "needle" in the otherwise legitimate "haystack." After detection, we coordinate sorties to the target of

interest, get a positive identification, and then monitor that suspect track until it can be turned over to the appropriate national or arrival-zone host-nation authorities.<sup>15</sup>

It is apparent from the description and the statistics that the command is focused on detections, target hand-offs, and the communication systems required to execute the mission over the expansive area of operations and across agency lines. These appear to be fairly quantifiable aspects of the operations conducted by the JTF. Rear Admiral Gee continues:

Since JTF-4 was formed three years ago, we have supported law enforcement with the seizure of more than 223 tons of narcotics--including 156 tons of cocaine--455 arrests, and more than 121 aircraft and vessels seizures. The retail market value of that effort is in excess of \$15 billion.<sup>16</sup>

These comments again drive home the support aspect of the mission while recognizing a direct link to the measures of seizures and arrests used by law enforcement. Rear Admiral Gee's comments reflect his assessment of success and effectiveness at the operational level, concentrating on his specific "piece of the pie."

The mission for JTF-6 is oriented on interdiction along the Southwest Border of the United States with Mexico. As such, the focus is on land and some air interdiction. JTF-6 measures of effectiveness, taken from the headquarters command briefing are:



### Service to Customers

- Mission objectives met
- Increase in number of support requests
- Requests for repeat business
- Resource/manpower savings to DLEA
- Intangible non-CD related benefits of mission
- Enhanced rapport between Dod and DLEAs

### PLUS

### Training Value/Opportunity Provided by Mission

- Training requirements completed
- Additional opportunities to exercise joint operations
- Number of units volunteering for the missions
- Increase in CD-related capabilities of military
- Highly favorable after action reports from units<sup>17</sup>

These measures of effectiveness are much less quantified than those deduced from the JTF-4 commander's comments. They represent a much more support-oriented point of view and appear to be focused more on the effectiveness of the command than on the effectiveness of the missions conducted in relation to the overall national goals. The assessment of mission effectiveness is primarily a function of supported customer satisfaction and supporting unit training value and satisfaction. This methodology is consistent with the JTF-6 mission statement in view of these operative words: "plans and coordinates" and "support that is requested."<sup>18</sup> JTF-6 does not keep statistics on seizures or arrests in any relation to measuring effectiveness.

To assess effectiveness, JTF-6 collects the comments of the supported agency and the comments of the supporting unit following the mission. Each is asked to rate the

effectiveness of the mission based on the law enforcement benefit and the unit training benefit. Law enforcement assesses the contribution of the military unit to the overall success of the operation, then quantifies that assessment by assigning a number from 0 to 4. Likewise, the military unit assesses its participation based on training value and also assigns a value from 0 to 4. Higher numbers reflect assessments of greater effectiveness. The results are graphed for presentation as shown in the example below:

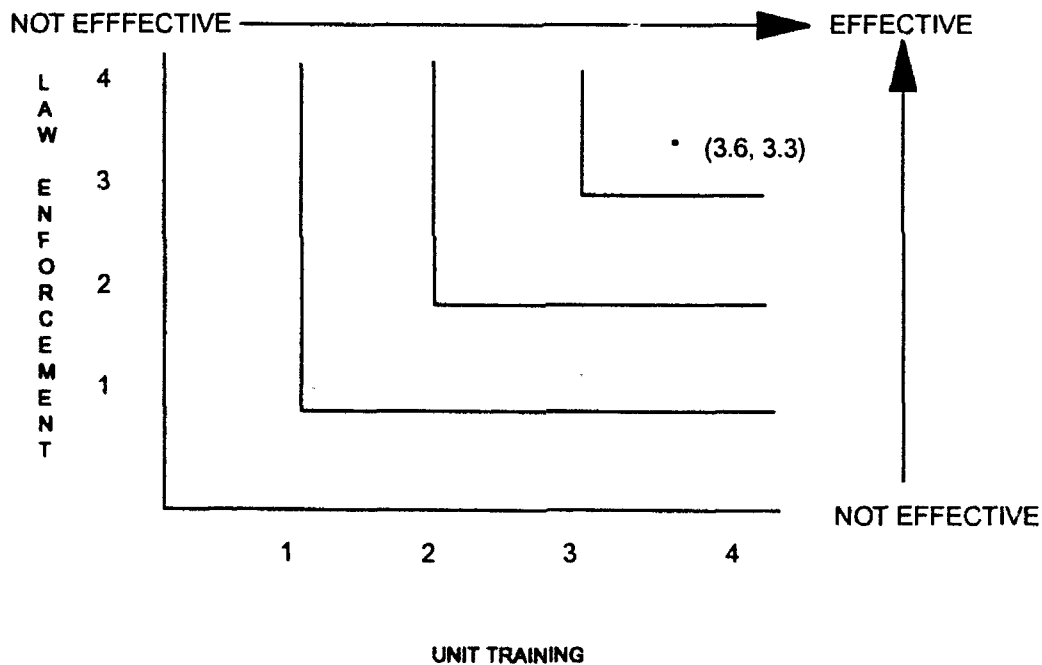


Fig. 3: JTF-6 Sample MOE

Individual units measure their own effectiveness according to local command procedures or according to what

the unit commander determines is the definition of success for his unit in the mission. There are many descriptions of the success of units at the tactical level that can equate to effectiveness for that operation. An engineer unit, for example, that assists the Border Patrol in repairing roads and fencing along the border can see immediate effect of their work through the increase in trafficability and the strengthened obstacles on that piece of terrain. The Air Force AWACS crew that successfully identifies a drug smuggling aircraft and vectors the intercept and final apprehension assets onto the target for a successful interdiction also sees the immediate tactical effectiveness of its efforts.<sup>19</sup> It is these types of tactical successes that, if they occur often enough in a given area, can lead to the operational level effect of denying a major trafficking route such as occurred in the Caribbean.

The final players in assessing the effectiveness are the supported law enforcement agencies themselves. These agencies include federal organizations such as the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the Border Patrol. Also included are state government level law enforcement agencies such as state police and county sheriffs. It is the local level operations of the federal agencies, however, that are most often supported. Their assessment as the front line

professionals in law enforcement is akin to expert testimony and, therefore, is a key measure of effectiveness.

In recognizing the importance of their input, the DOD staff included 13 supported federal agencies in their review of DODs program in 1993.<sup>20</sup> In reference to nine specific military interdiction programs identified as having the highest impact on stopping the flow of drugs, the review reports that the "programs were each praised by the DOD and LEA briefers for their effectiveness."<sup>21</sup>

In 1991, a study was conducted to obtain a sensing of county sheriffs across the United States as to their assessment of the effectiveness of military counterdrug operations. They were overwhelmingly positive about the effectiveness of the military in this effort.<sup>22</sup> Again, here is positive commentary from subject matter experts.

There are two other aspects of the military contribution to the counterdrug effort that do not result in quantifiable results but do, nonetheless, play a significant role in the effort to stop the drug flow. They are research and development of non-intrusive inspection technology and the visible display of national resolve that military operations bring. Each of these deserves a short discussion.

In a January 1993 report to Congress, the GAO describes a technology development profile that shows the Department of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency as

the clear leader in developing non-intrusive inspection devices. Where other agencies depend primarily on modifications to off-the-shelf technology, DOD has 12 original projects ongoing, three of which are being tested, and all of which are on time with development schedules.<sup>23</sup>

Another success in the military effort has been the visible demonstration of U.S. national resolve both at home and in source countries. Army doctrine, contained in Field Manual 100-5, describes show of force operations as actions that "lend credibility to the nation's commitments, increase regional influence, and demonstrate resolve."<sup>24</sup> Though not part of the mission statement, the military sends a clear signal of commitment by its mere presence. Show of force is a valuable effect that cannot be measured in quantifiable terms.

#### Summary

It is no surprise that there is difficulty in deciding what are the appropriate measures of effectiveness of the military contribution to the counterdrug effort. There are many and varying interests in measuring effectiveness from the national level down to the military unit level. Some interests are as tangible as financial budgets and some are as nebulous as demonstrating commitment. To further compound the problem, there are very distinct levels from which to assess. From the national

level, it is the drug availability goals of the National Drug Control Strategy that are the focus. At the operational and tactical level, that focus is modified for the military unit by a combination of legal constraints and mission statements.

The challenge, then, becomes one of determining the appropriate level from which to assess the effectiveness of military counterdrug operations. The conclusions that follow in the final chapter will center on this theme.

### Endnotes

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<sup>2</sup>General Accounting Office, Memorandum: Report to House of Representatives, Committee on Government Operations. (Washington, D.C.: GAO, 1993), 3.

<sup>3</sup>General Accounting Office, Drug Control: Impact of DoDs Detection and Monitoring on Cocaine Flow, (Washington, D.C.: GAO, 1991), 1-5.

<sup>4</sup>General Accounting Office, Memorandum: Report to House of Representatives, Committee on Government Operations. (Washington, D.C.: GAO, 1993), 3.

<sup>5</sup>General Accounting Office, Drug Control: Expanded Military Surveillance Not Justified by Measurable Goals or Results, Statement by Louis J. Rodrigues, Director, Systems Development and Production Issues, National Security and International Affairs Division. (Washington, D.C.: GAO, 1993), 4.

<sup>6</sup>Majority Staffs of the Senate Judiciary Committee and the International Narcotics Control Caucus, "America's Drug Strategy: Lessons of the Past...Steps Toward the Future." (Washington, D.C., 1993), 117.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid, 138.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid, 140.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid, 119.

<sup>10</sup>Department of Defense, Comprehensive Review: DoD Counterdrug Program, (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Coordinator for Drug Enforcement Policy and Support, Department of Defense, 1993), 58.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid, 62.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid, 66.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid, 66.

<sup>14</sup>William V. Allen, LTC, "Counterdrug Information Request." (U.S. Army memorandum, Ft. McPherson, GA: Headquarters, Forces Command, 1994)

<sup>15</sup>George N. Gee, RADM, USN, "Vigilance in Paradise." Interview by Captain Vince Thomas. Proceedings, October 1992, 87.

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<sup>19</sup>Becky Colaw, CPT, "War on Drugs: Keeping Watch on the Golden Road." Airman Magazine, May 1993, 22-24.

<sup>20</sup>Department of Defense, 7.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid, 65.

<sup>22</sup>T.E. Dunkelberger, Measuring Department of Defense Effectiveness in Counternarcotics Support, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Army War College, 1993), 22.

<sup>23</sup>General Accounting Office, Drug Control: Status Report on Counterdrug Technology Development: Report to Congressional Requestors, (Washington, D.C.: GAO, 1993), 10-17.

<sup>24</sup>U.S. Army, FM 100-5: Operations, (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 1993), 13-7.



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research was to determine if military force and capability had significantly increased success in stemming the flow of illegal drugs into the United States. To conclude one way or the other on the topic equates to measuring the effectiveness of the effort. As is now evident, measuring effectiveness is a controversial and complicated process that lies at the heart of the issue. This controversy is not obvious in the original thesis question.

After reviewing the history, the threat, the military organizational structure and missions, and the controversy over measuring effectiveness, the following conclusions are offered:

1. The military capabilities employed in the counterdrug effort have had significant effect on canalizing the flow of drugs into the United States. Continued efforts can have a marked effect on stemming the overall flow.

2. In its role of support to other agencies, the military cannot be expected to win the "war on drugs."

3. Both quantitative and subjective measures of effectiveness are valuable in the assessment of the effort. They must, however, be applied at the appropriate level (tactical, operational, or strategic) and should be interrelated among the levels.

The basis for these conclusions is developed in the following discussions.

#### Conclusion One

The application of military capability has significantly improved drug flow interdiction efforts. Success is visible at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of the effort.

Viewed from the national level, the reduction of the drug supply is one part of a two-part strategy to rid our nation of the problem of illegal drugs. The other part of the strategy is to reduce the demand. Both must work together and their effects will be mutual. The availability of cocaine, regrettably, has not gone down over the past four years. On a positive note, however, it has not gone up, either. This state of equilibrium suggests that both supply and demand have somewhat stabilized. In light of what was a rapidly growing problem in the mid-1980s, this stabilization represents an overall strategic success in that the growth of the problem has been stunted. Since the two pillars of the strategy are mutually dependent for the

strategy to succeed, both supply reduction and demand reduction must have succeeded in order to stop the increase and stabilize the situation.

At the operational level, interdiction efforts have effectively closed the Caribbean-to-Florida trafficking route. The pessimists say that the smugglers are already adapting by using new routes and methods and that this indicates a hopeless situation that can never be overcome. To the contrary, the successful, long term interdiction of a major route equating to an area of operations signals a great success. The enemy has been denied his primary avenue of approach and has shifted to an alternate. The employment of military capability in detection and monitoring was the key to this success. The next step should be to work harder at denying the enemy his alternate approach through Mexico. If he shifts again, so must the interdiction effort. Perseverance and commitment are critical at this point.

At the tactical level, there is little doubt as to the effectiveness of the military units involved. All means of military surveillance, detection, and monitoring are at work and daily their efforts result in some interdiction. Newspapers, magazines and after action reports are filled with examples of the great tactical success of the units in the field.

It is critical that tactical actions are interwoven to create operational success and that operational successes combine to meet the goals of the national strategy.

#### Conclusion Two

The military cannot win the "War on Drugs" by being a supporter of law enforcement agencies that are the front line in interdiction. Likewise, when functioning at the operational and tactical levels only, the military cannot be held accountable for the failure to meet the strategic goals of drug availability reduction. There are many other agencies working together within the dynamics of what is a very complex and interrelated strategy.

The support nature of the military role in drug traffic interdiction is a result of the legal restrictions on the use of the military and the fact that the military's primary mission is still to be prepared to fight the nation's wars. There is no one agency or asset that can single-handedly defeat the threat of illegal drug trafficking. This applies to the front line law enforcers who are empowered to physically stop the criminals. It especially applies to those who are in support of law enforcement, including the military, who function to enhance the effects of the people at the front. The effort is a cooperative one in which each facet depends on the other for overall success. Tactically and, to a certain extent,

operationally, each agency executes its assigned missions as aggressively and efficiently as possible. Combining the efforts of several agencies allows the combined team to maximize the capabilities of each member while minimizing deficiencies. The results that the team is able to accomplish is because of the complimentary nature of the efforts.

In a simplistic metaphor, a football team's offensive squad must have good blocking as well as good running. When the team scores, the success is rarely attributed to only one or the other. Likewise, when the team fails to score it is rarely blamed on only one aspect. Success, or effectiveness, for the blockers is opening the hole in the line. Success for the runner is moving through the hole with enough speed and power to get over the goal line. Success for the team is the touchdown.

This concept of mutual support, dependence, and teamwork should be well understood by all military thinkers as it is the essence of combined arms and joint U.S. warfighting doctrine. The military role on the team is to support. It is that role upon which the military should focus and it is in the context of that role that military effectiveness should be assessed.

### Conclusion Three

The issue of measures of effectiveness must be resolved so that a clear picture of the overall effort is available. Those measures must be applicable to the level of operations that is being assessed and the measures should have connectivity among levels. Additionally, the imprecise nature of the conflict demands acceptance of some subjectivity in measures of effectiveness.

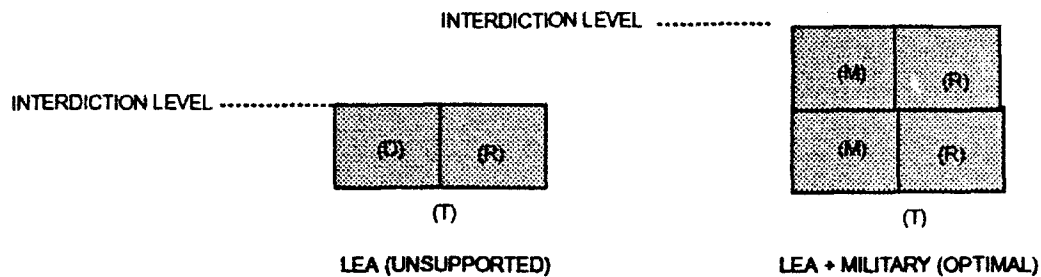
It is reasonable to consider the availability of drugs on the street as a measure of the effectiveness of national strategy. Reduction in availability is a stated strategic goal. It is not, however, reasonable to apply that same strategic measure to the efforts of the Border Patrol, the Arizona State Police, or to the United States military. Though they are all working toward the strategic end, these organizations each have only a part of the responsibility for reducing drug availability on the street and none, especially the military in its support role, should be held singularly responsible for the accomplishment of that end.

Tactical and operational level measures of effectiveness that can be related to the strategy goals should be used in evaluating the military contribution. Many measures previously discussed are appropriate and meaningful. Some could be made more quantifiable, but only at the risk of extreme record keeping workloads on law

enforcement agencies and military units. For example, surveillance support to law enforcement agencies could be quantified by relating the unit presence with the law enforcement agency's ability to divert manpower from surveillance operations to apprehensions and seizures. This could be in terms of man-hours devoted to each function.

Likewise, the effectiveness of the overall operation could also be documented in terms of numbers of detections by military units that result in successful apprehensions by law officers and compare the result to the same law enforcement agency's apprehension rate without the military support. By this method a more clear representation of the military contribution to arrests and seizures may be correlated. Also evident would be the amount of military surveillance to which law enforcement can respond. From this may come a better indication of how much military effort is appropriate.

The diagram in Figure 4 portrays the dilemma. The premise of the diagram is that every unit of detection (D) requires a corresponding unit of response (R) for optimal efficiency and balance in the system. If military units are limited to detection, then optimal efficiency may be achieved by applying units of military detection (M) at a level equal to the maximized LEA response capability (R). To determine the optimal value for (M), the maximum possible value for (R) must be defined.



TOTAL INTERDICTION CAPABILITY (T) = DETECTION CAPABILITY (D) + RESPONSE CAPABILITY (R)

(M) = MILITARY DETECTION CAPABILITY

Fig. 4: Detection and Response

These ideas are not intended to appear revolutionary. Rather they are merely intended to illustrate. Possibly they are already in use in some places. If so, the research and requests for information did not uncover that fact.

This type of adjustment to the measures of effectiveness would allow a simpler transition from tactical to operational to strategic. Allowing that transition would simplify the building block process required to get from tactical to strategic success.

#### Recommended Research

The topic of military intervention in the counterdrug effort is one that has many facets. There are



several areas that stand out as being clearly in need of more investigation. They are:

1. Illegal drug trafficking from Asia into the United States.
2. The European and Asian military response to illegal drug traffic.
3. Strategic threat analysis, U.S. military style.
3. Detailed analysis to recommend measures of effectiveness.

Each of these subjects presents a formidable challenge but would surely prove fascinating and of great value to the entire counterdrug community.

#### Summary

The national battle to secure the United States from the ravages of illegal drugs and their associated social ills is a noble one. It is unlike any other national security threat today. No one agency or element of power can singlehandedly defeat this threat. It will be a long and difficult fight in which success will come in small increments and it will take the best efforts of all Americans to overcome the threat. The United States military has and will continue to contribute mightily to this cause.

### Afterword

In the course of this research project it became quickly evident that the nature of the topic is relatively new and emerging. With that condition comes the challenge of managing information and opinions that appear during the course of the research, especially in the latter stages. As this project progressed, there was a significant amount of effort at the federal level to review the entire National Drug Control Strategy for its effectiveness and appropriate orientation. The Department of Defense portion of that review was included in previous discussion.

In February of 1994, the President released his revised drug control strategy. It is significant to note that at this time, approximately four and one half years after Congress mandated Defense Department roles in the counterdrug effort, the emphasis is shifting away from supply reduction and interdiction and in the direction of demand reduction and treatment. The military role in the current strategy is much less specified than in previous editions.

Only time will tell what mix of emphasis will result in success for the nation. It is perseverance in this type of challenge that must be the watchword. Despite the difficulty and disagreement in measuring effectiveness of interdiction efforts, four and one half years is a relatively short period of time to consider in drawing any

long term conclusions about overall effectiveness. It is clear that the strategy must contain both demand and supply reduction aspects. It would be, however, a giant step backwards to dismantle or to discount the capabilities that have been developed among law enforcement and the military to assist in choking off the supply. The pressure must continue.

APPENDIX A  
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION:  
CIVILIAN AGENCY

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Command and General Staff College  
Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas 66027

January 13, 1994

Civilian Agency

Dear Sirs:

The purpose of this letter is to request information from your organization for use in writing my master's thesis. I am a student at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and am working toward a Master of Military Art and Science degree. The topic of my thesis is "Military Support of Drug Interdiction: Is It Working?"

My primary research question is: Is the application of military force in support of law enforcement agencies an effective counter to the trafficking of illegal drugs into the United States? I am concentrating on traffic from South and Central America.

I would very much appreciate any information that is unclassified that you could send me in the following topic areas:

- a. General descriptions of counterdrug operations supported by U.S. military.
- b. General descriptions of your organization and how it coordinates and communicates with the U.S. military.
- c. After action reports.
- d. Lessons learned.
- e. Evaluations of effectiveness of those operations against drug trafficking.

Secondly, I would appreciate your unclassified response to the following questions:

- a. How do you measure the effectiveness of military support to counterdrug operations?
- b. What current military operations are most beneficial to the counterdrug effort?
- c. What current military operations should be discontinued due lack of effect?

d. What military operations or capabilities should be made available that are not currently available to law enforcement?

Finally, I am also interested in developing a clear picture of the threat we are facing. In relation to that effort, I would appreciate any unclassified information you could send me in these topic areas:

a. Descriptions of primary drug trafficking organizations, to include numbers of personnel, organizational structure and leadership.

b. Methods of operations for these organizations.

c. Weapons and other equipment used.

d. Strengths and weaknesses.

As I am a student and do not have an office, please send the information to my home address:

MAJ Gerald G. Howard  
51 Dragoon  
Ft. Leavenworth, KS 66027

My telephone number, should you need it, is 913-682-7328.

I very much appreciate your assistance in this research effort and look forward to any information you can send.

Sincerely,

Gerald G. Howard  
Major, U.S. Army

APPENDIX B  
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION:  
MILITARY

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Command and General Staff College  
Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas 66027

13 January 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR: Military Unit

SUBJECT: Request for Information

1. The purpose of this letter is to request information from your organization for use in writing my master's thesis. I am a student at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and am working toward a Master of Military Art and Science degree. The topic of my thesis is "Military Support of Drug Interdiction: Is It Working?"

2. My primary research question is: Is the application of military force in support of law enforcement agencies an effective counter to the trafficking of illegal drugs into the United States? I am concentrating on traffic from South and Central America.

3. I would very much appreciate any information that is unclassified that you could send me in the following topic areas:

a. Mission statement for your organization as it relates to counterdrug operations.

b. General descriptions of your organization and operations.

c. After action reports.

d. Lessons learned.

e. Evaluations of effectiveness against drug trafficking.

4. Secondly, I would appreciate your unclassified response to the following questions:

a. How do you measure the effectiveness of military counterdrug operations?

b. What current military operations are most effective?



SUBJECT: Request for Information

c. What current military operations should be discontinued due to lack of effect?

d. What military operations or capabilities should be made available to law enforcement agencies that is not currently available?

5. Finally, I am also interested in developing a clear picture of the threat we are facing. In relation to that effort, I would appreciate any unclassified information you could send me in these topic areas:

a. Descriptions of primary drug trafficking organizations, to include numbers of personnel, organizational structure and leadership.

b. Methods of operations for these organizations.

c. Weapons and other equipment used.

d. Strengths and weaknesses.

6. As I am a student and do not have an office, please send the information to my home address:

MAJ Gerald G. Howard  
51 Dragoon  
Ft. Leavenworth, KS 66027

My telephone number, should you need it, is 913-682-7328.

7. I very much appreciate your assistance in this research effort and look forward to any information you can send.

GERALD G. HOWARD  
MAJ, AV  
U.S. Army

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